



FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom
Worship • Stewardship • Mission

May 26, 2024

VOL. 89

NO. 21

Rev. Stephen J. Niermann, Pastor
Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

Church: 419-598-8961 Home: 419-598-8181
School: 419-598-8702
Church Website: www.sjl.org

THE HOLY TRINITY

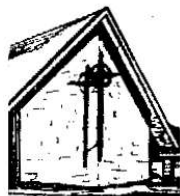
Sermon & Text: “Mysterious but Good” *John 3:1-17; Isaiah 6:1-8*

Order of Service: See printed Service Folder

Hymns: 905 ~ 507 ~ “O Gracious Lord, with Love Draw Near” ~ 940 ~ 895

WELCOME TO OUR VETERANS & VISITORS

On this Memorial Day Weekend, welcome to this service of worship in which we remember, with reverence and thanksgiving, those who gave their lives for our country. Above all, however, we would remember Him whose love includes people of all nations—our Lord Jesus who gave His life for all of us. May the remembrance of His sacrifice bring reconciliation and peace! If you are a visitor today, please fill out a blue pew card in front of you and drop it in the baskets at the doors as you leave today.



SERVING IN GOD’S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✘ Elaine Buenger, *Organist* ✘ Cayden Ruffer, Zeek Kramer, *Acolyte* ✘
- ✘ Mike Maassel, Scott Van Valkenburg, Ian Rosebrook, Carey Damman, *Ushers* ✘
- ✘ Anita Badenhop, Pat Maassel, Kathy Behnfeldt, *Altar Guild* ✘



Holy Trinity

TODAY IS THE FESTIVAL OF THE HOLY TRINITY – If you love the Holy Trinity, the Father who created us, the Son who redeemed us, the Spirit who sanctifies us ~ if you love singing the hymn, “Holy, Holy, Holy” ~ if you love reciting the Athanasian Creed (and who doesn’t?) ~ if you love celebrating the mystery of God’s nature which is beyond human understanding but true nevertheless ~ you will love our worship this morning! Let’s celebrate the Holy Trinity!

THURSDAY EVENING SERVICES – Thursday evening services are underway. Each Thursday service is a preview of the coming Sunday service, with Communion on the Thursdays prior to Communion Sundays. *Special note: This Thursday, May 30, there will be no evening service.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL: There will be no Sunday School during the months of June, July, and August. We will resume Sunday School on September 8th.

In God's House This Week		Online church calendar: https://74058984.view-events.com
Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM	Worship Service & High School Graduate Recognition Adult Bible Study
Tues.	9:00 AM	Teacher Work Day
Wed.	7:00 PM	Adult Choir Practice
Sun.	10:00AM 12:00PM	Communion Service & Pastor's Retirement Pastor's Retirement Celebration (<i>see bulletin note</i>)

MATTERS FOR PRAYER – Please keep these people in your prayers:

- ❖ *Melba Elling, Norma Damman, and Elaine Hesterman (rehabbing), at Genacross*
- ❖ *Lawrence Behrmann, at Northcrest Nursing & Rehab*
- ❖ *Our Shut-Ins: Irene Joost, Leona Durham, and Elaine Mahnke*
- ❖ *Military: Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Emily Carmon, Jared Dishop, Jordan Lange*
- ❖ *Alan Gruenhagen and Lowell Petzoldt, dealing with health concerns related to cancer*
- ❖ *Steve Miller, recuperating from back surgery last week*

ARCHIVES DISPLAY: The Archives Committee members have put up a display of past Confirmation classes ranging from classes who would have celebrated their 80th anniversary to those classes celebrating their 5th anniversary. Come and check it out in the side hallway by the church.



CONGRATULATIONS, 2024 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

This morning we welcome the youth of St. John who are graduating from high school this year. They are Brooks Behnfeldt, Aleeah Brown, Devin Dietrich, Emersyn Gerken, Colton Kruse, Landen Kruse, Trenton Kruse, and Jared Lange.

Most of these were confirmed on Trinity Sunday of 2020, when COVID had us

‘social distancing.’ We congratulate them this day, and will take a few moments to interview each of them to learn of their plans for the future. We will also bless them and pray for them, that God would go with them in all their ways, and, above all, preserve them faithful and true in Christian faith and life, until the coming of Jesus.

Congratulations to the High School Graduates of 2024

PASTOR'S RETIREMENT SERVICE AND DINNER – Sunday, June 2

Next Sunday, June 2nd, Pastor Niermann will be retiring from full-time ministry and from the pastoral office at St. John Lutheran. Pastor will preach his farewell sermon and administer the sacrament for us one last time. Worship that morning will be an hour later than normal, at 10:00 a.m. A door offering as a gift for Pastor will be received. After worship we will proceed to the Ridgeville Legion Hall where there will be some time before dinner to greet Pastor and to mingle. The dinner will begin at noon.

FINANCIAL FACTS:

	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 05/19/24	\$6,093.00	\$185.00	\$190.00

ATTENDANCE: Thursday (5/16/24) – 21; Sunday (5/19/24) – 157

MY DEVOTION BOOKLETS for the next quarter, *June, July, and August*, are available on the desk in the narthex. These are nice kid-friendly family devotions. Take time to be together and grow in your faith. Pick up a copy today!

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY – Jesus’ Resurrection

This morning we will be looking at our final installment of the *Miracles of Jesus* Bible study. We have considered many of our Lord’s miracles – changing water into wine, miracle of healing, the feeding of the five thousand, and of His incarnation. Today we study the culminating miracle of the resurrection of Jesus. This was the miracle that utterly and completely changed the lives of the disciples – so much so that as witnesses, they would all lay down their lives to proclaim this great act of God. We hope you can join us this morning. God’s Word is on tap, and so is the coffee!



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL has been set for June 3-7 from 9:00 to 11:30 each morning, Monday through Friday. Our theme this year is, **CELEBRATE THE SAVIOR**. In a fair-like setting we will learn about lots of people who celebrated Jesus: the wise men, the healed paralytic, the witnesses of the resurrection, and more. Of all the blessings God gives us,

His Son, Jesus is the biggest reason to celebrate. Join us for the best fair of them all! To enroll a student, or to volunteer as a helper, please visit our VBS website at vbsmate.com/stjohnfreedomvbs24

- A link for our VBS website is also provided on our homepage at sjl.org.
- If you prefer, you can register a student using the paper forms available in the narthex.
- **VBS fliers are on the narthex table. Pick up a few to use as invitations for others!**

WANTED – JAVA JOY HOSTS We are looking for a few people or groups of people to host *JAVA JOY* on the second Sundays of the remaining months of 2024. Please remember that hosting does not need to cost you anything – you may reimburse yourself from the Java Joy kitty. Also, hosting guidelines are available next to the sign-up sheet in the narthex. Thank you for providing this wonderful service for the fellowship and enjoyment of your church family.

LUTHERAN NIGHT WITH FORT WAYNE TINCAPS – Tuesday, June 18

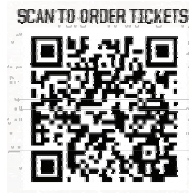
What’s more fun than a bunch of Lutherans enjoying an evening of baseball?

Answer: A bunch of Lutherans singing “A Mighty Fortress” together!

But still, the baseball is fun too! **The Fort Wayne Tincaps are sponsoring a Lutheran Night Outing.** Use the scan code to unlock all the benefits --- \$12 tickets (\$1 of which will be donated to the *Care Package Program*

of Worship Anew.); \$2 concessions including hot dogs, popcorn, soft drinks, and pizza slices; entrance into a drawing for \$50 (website: fevo-enterprise.com/event/Lutherannight6). The choir of Concordia Lutheran

High School in Fort Wayne will sing the national anthem. Organize yourselves into groups and order tickets together to ensure adjacent seating. Game time is at 7:05 p.m. and there will be fireworks after the game. Travel time from St. John is 1 hour, 15 minutes.



LWML INGATHERING: The Women of Freedom are collecting new, greeting cards for the LWML State Convention Ingathering Mission. Examples of cards can be Thinking of You cards, Just A Note cards, any encouraging cards, etc. Please place them in box on the narthex table labeled “LWML Cards” and they will be taken to the Convention. Thank you!!

SUMMER SAVE THE DATE!!- The Women of Freedom will be heading to Special Grounds Coffee in Wauseon on June 18th at 10 AM for a tour of the facility, followed by social time and brunch/lunch at Special Grounds. This will take the place of the June Women of Freedom meeting. Everyone invited!

LWML SUMMER QUARTERLIES have arrived and are available in the tract rack by the narthex table. Pick up your copy today!

SUMMER OFFICE HOURS: Please note the church office hours during the summer months are Tuesday thru Friday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Closed over the lunch hour and all day on Mondays. If making a special trip, please call 419-598-8961 or 598-8702 to guarantee someone will be here.

FULL-TIME SCHOOL SECRETARIAL POSITION: We are now accepting resumés from anyone interested in applying for the full-time position of School Secretary. This is a fulltime position, working year-round. Requirements are a high school diploma, an accounting background, a good familiarity with Word, Excel, and Google Drive, computer use, and the ability to maintain a strict confidence. An Associate Degree in the secretarial field is a bonus. Applicants must be willing to submit a résumé, obtain a background check, supply three references, and must adhere to the religious beliefs of St. John Lutheran Church. Resumes should be emailed to tgermann@sjl.org, or dropped off at the school office.

PART-TIME CHURCH SECRETARY POSITION – We are currently seeking applicants for a part-time church secretary. This job would involve working two days per week (probably later in the week). Required are a high school diploma, an accounting background, a good familiarity with word processing, data base and computer use, and the ability to maintain a strict confidence. An Associate Degree in the secretarial field is a bonus. Applicants must be willing to submit a résumé, obtain a background check, supply three references, and must adhere to the religious beliefs of St. John Lutheran Church. If you know someone interested, please call the church office at 419-598-8961.

UPDATE - PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT – St. John Lutheran Preschool is still accepting enrollment applications for 2024-25 school year. The 4-yr old class still has open spots, and the 3-yr old class also has availability for next year. Anyone interested in enrolling your child in our preschool program should contact the school office at 419-598-8702 to request enrollment papers.

SCRIP FOR GRADUATION: Why not use the PTL SCRIP Program to order gift cards for those graduating seniors in your lives. Order forms are available online via FastDirect or in the tract rack at the narthex table. Please turn those orders in on Wednesdays, with payment to *St. John School PTL Scrip Program*. The gift cards will be sent home the following week on Tuesday. Payment must accompany orders. **Any questions about SCRIP can be directed to SCRIP Coordinator Kristyn Honemann at 419-966-0207 or email at honemann@embarqmail.com.**

INTERESTED IN A CHURCH PROFESSION? WE'D LIKE TO HELP! Over the years a number of young people from St. John have pursued educational goals to prepare them for full-time service as teachers and pastors. If you are interested in a church profession (*as a pastor, deaconess, teacher, lay minister, or a Director of Christian Education, Christian Outreach, Parish Music, or Family Life Ministry*), our congregation would like to support you by offering a tuition gift. An application for this gift is available online --- type **www.sjl.org/student_gift_app.pdf** into your browser (*there is no link*) and fill out the application. Deadline for fall enrollment is June 1st.

WOMEN OF FREEDOM SCHOLARSHIPS: Here is another opportunity to encourage and help young people prepare for service to the church as pastors, teachers, lay workers, deaconesses, etc. \$500 per year Women of Freedom Scholarships are available to any young person attending one of our synodical schools. Simply contact any Women of Freedom member for more details about this.

PIERSTORF COLLEGE FUND: The Pierstorf College Fund is a one-of-a-kind pan Lutheran financial aid program that provides interest-free loans to all Lutherans pursuing a higher education who live in the State of Ohio. These loans are specific to students who are or will be enrolled full time in a four-year undergraduate program at any accredited college or university. For information, visit www.Pierstorf.org to complete the online 2024-2025 application. Application deadline is June 30, 2024. Questions can be emailed to Pierstorf@messiahfp.org.

REPORT CARDS: End of the year report cards can be viewed in FastDirect as of Mon., June 3rd.

ANNUAL SCHOOL CLEANING DATES have been set for Mon., July 22 and Wed., July 24 starting at 5:00 PM both nights. Please read the Parent Participation Policy in FastDirect with all the details about family requirements for School Cleaning. The carpets will be cleaned on Tues., July 23, so no cleaning is done on Tuesday.

ST. JOHN GIRLS B-BALL OPEN GYMS: Coach Schroeder will be holding open gyms for girls who are going into Grades K-6 next school year. These will be held at St. John from 10 – 11:30 AM on the following dates: July 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24. Informational flyers are available on the narthex table. Any questions...call Coach Schroeder at 419-591-6655.

PROJECT CONNECT – There are many free booklets in the rack in the narthex. Be sure to check for some informative reading. Some titles are: *“Alzheimer’s: Facing the Loss of a Lifetime,” “Talking with God,” “Forgiveness is a Choice,” “Talking Openly with Kids,” “Setting Priorities,” “Your Place in God’s Plan,” “Stressed but Connected,” “Beyond Divorce,” “For Better, For Worse,” “What Is Faith in Jesus?”* and many more. These booklets are furnished through the Lutheran Hour Ministries.

WORSHIP ANEW: Lutheran Ministries Media, Inc. produces a weekly, 30-minute Lutheran broadcast worship service called Worship Anew (*formerly Worship For Shut-Ins*). Each service includes music, scripture readings, prayers, and a pastor delivering a message that is designed to feel one-on-one to the viewer. They look forward to the continuation and expansion of this ministry in the years to come. Lutheran Ministries Media would like to thank you for your prayers and support of God’s work through Worship Anew. Broadcasts can be viewed every Sunday on: *Toledo’s WTVG (CW) Channel 13.2 at 10:30 AM.*

THE LUTHERAN HOUR – Locally you can listen to the Lutheran Hour Ministries broadcast on WMTR 96.1 FM, Archbold at 7:30 AM or on WNDH 103.1 FM, Napoleon at approximately 9:00 AM every Sunday. They cover many interesting topics relevant to today's issues.

IF YOU'RE EVER IN A PINCH and could use a little help, the *Good Neighbor Fund* is there to assist you too! Please don't be bashful about asking – everything is strictly confidential. Just give Pastor Niermann a call, and we'll see what we can do!

'BREAD FROM HEAVEN' – A note to St. John members needing food assistance – If you could use food assistance from our food pantry, please speak with *Pastor Niermann*. We are required by the *Northwestern Ohio Food Bank* to keep a record with your name, but pastor will keep your record separate and absolutely confidential.

Contributions can be made at any time. Monetary gifts can be given to the *Good Neighbor Fund* (note it on your offering envelope). Food donations for our pantry can be dropped off in the box by the Archives display cases. **Food items especially needed at this time are: spaghetti sauce, noodles, soup, saltines and any crackers.** Any and all contributions are always greatly appreciated.

HEARING ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE: If hearing in worship has been a problem for you, pick up one of the receiver units for our hearing assistance system. An usher will assist you and you'll hear much more clearly. (*Also, please let us know how the system is working for you.*)

For those who use the hearing assistance system regularly and for the sake of hygiene, we ask that you claim one of the ear buds as your own and keep it with you in your purse, pocket, etc. Bring it with you when you come to church, and simply plug it into one of the receivers. At the end of the service, unplug the ear bud to take with you until the next time.

TURN YOUR OLD USED CELL PHONE INTO A GIFT FOR THE POOR AND FOR YOUR CHURCH!

Informed sources tell us that the average American household has 5 to 6 old unused cell phones lying around. Now you can put those phones to good use AND keep them out of the landfills. Bring them to church and deposit them in the large white box in the narthex. They will be forwarded to a company that sorts them and prepares them to be given to poor families for emergency use, and sends us a check. Old cell phones range in value from \$1 up to \$50.



MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE: The Ridgeville Corners Memorial Day service to remember those who served our country will be held on **Mon., May 27 at 10:30 AM** at the Ridgeville American Legion. **Flag Drill:** Children age PreK thru 4th Grade are invited to participate in the flag drill during the Ridgeville Memorial Day service. Practices will be held on Tues., May 21 & Thurs., May 23 at 6:30 PM. Call *Laura Bickel* at 419-267-5203 or *Jenny Behnfeldt* at 419-267-5636 for questions or more info on the flag drill.

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Food For Thought...

No one gets lost on a straight road.

"Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths." (Psalm 25:4)